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THE INDYPENDENT

Issue #78, October 19 – November 8, 2005

a FREE paper for free people

An Army of None

Counter-recruiters
Chip Away at the
Military Marketing
Machine

See John Tarleton, p6



DAVID HOLLENBACH

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WHAT IS INDYMEDIA?

With autonomous chapters in more than 120 cities throughout the world, the Independent Media Center is an international network of volunteer media activists.

The IMC seeks to create a new media ethic by providing progressive, in-depth and accurate coverage of issues. We are a community-based organization using media to facilitate political and cultural self-representation. We seek to analyze issues affecting individuals, communities and ecosystems by providing media tools and space to those seeking to communicate. We espouse open dialogue and placing the means of communication and creativity back in the hands of the people, away from the drive of profit.

The Independent is funded by benefits, subscriptions, donations, grants and ads from organizations and individuals with similar missions.

WHAT CAN I DO TO GET INVOLVED?

The IMC has an open door. You can write and distribute for *The Independent*, video-tape events and rallies, update the web-site, self-publish articles to the web, take photos or just help us run the office. As an organization relying on volunteer support, we encourage all forms of participation.

The print team reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity. We welcome your participation in the entire editorial process.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR october – november

BE THE MEDIA. LEARN THE BASICS OF JOURNALISM.



The Independent is holding a two-part community reporting workshop series on
**Saturdays Nov. 5 and 12 at our office on
34 E. 29th St. To register, e-mail indyreporting@yahoo.com
or call (212) 684-8112. \$20 sliding scale.**

THU OCT 20

8pm • \$10/\$15/\$25 suggested
10 BRECHT POEMS, part of the Brecht Forum's 30th Anniversary BRECHT FEST!
Celebrates the voice of artists, Brecht the poet, the wonders of theater and humankind's unstoppable struggle for light in the shadows of war, oppression and suffering.
Brecht Forum, 451 West St.
(betw. Bank and Bethune Sts.)

FRI OCT 21

7:30pm • \$10/\$15/\$25 suggested
AN EVENING WITH THE THEATER OF THE OPPRESSED LABORATORY
Celebrating TOPLAB's 15th Anniversary Year!
Brecht Forum, 451 West St.
(betw. Bank and Bethune Sts.)
(212) 924-1858, www.toplab.org

FRI-SAT OCT 21-22

Friday 6pm, Saturday 10am • \$30 (\$20 for one day only) Students/low income: \$15 (\$10 for one day).
2005 INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY ON CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY COMMITTED BY THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION OF THE UNITED STATES
Register online at www.bushcommission.org or by phone: 212-941-8086.
Grand Ballroom of the Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St..

SAT OCT 22

2pm (March to times square begins at 3:30pm) • FREE
10TH ANNUAL NATIONAL DAY OF PROTEST to STOP POLICE BRUTALITY, REPRESSION and the CRIMINALIZATION of a GENERATION
Wear Black! Fight Back! BASTA YA! If you see something... say something!
Union Square South at 2pm.
Office@october22.org for more information.

11am-5pm • FREE
BROOKLYN PEACE FAIR
All are welcome for a day of performances, workshops and children's activities! Dozens of peace and social justice groups will be on hand. Cindy Sheehan will give the keynote address at 11am.
YWCA 30 Third Ave. at Atlantic Ave.
brooklynpeace.org

11:30am • FREE
JANE BENEDICT HAWLEY CELEBRATION
Join us for a celebration of the life and work of Jane Benedict Hawley, a public champion who mobilized tenants and protected affordable housing in New York City.
92nd St. Y, Warburg Lounge, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St.

8 – 11pm • \$5-\$20 suggested
LOUNGE NIGHT FUNDRAISER FOR INCITE! NEW ORLEANS

Good vibes, music, conversation. Support Incite's work in New Orleans. Donation includes one free glass of sangria or non-alcoholic drink.
Refugio, 40 Scholes Street, Brooklyn (L, J, Z to Lorimer or G to Broadway)
For more info, call (347) 661-2443.

SUN OCT 23

4pm • \$6/\$10/\$15 suggested
NEW YORK IS NEW ORLEANS
Hip Hop Artists in Solidarity with the Survivors of Katrina
featuring: Afi, Blacklist, Bomani, Bullet and others from Urban Word, Mental Notes, Sistahood, Nana Soul, Spirit, The Welfare Poets and more. Our city faces so many of the same social ills that plagued New Orleans until its collapse. What will we build in response?
Brecht Forum, 451 West St.
(betw. Bank and Bethune Sts.)

WED OCT 26

7– 9pm • \$5-\$10 (noone turned away)
THE REVOLUTION WILL NOT BE FUNDED
Join us for an important discussion on the rise of "The Non-Profit Industrial Complex" and its implications for autonomous social movements. Celebrate the release of the new issue of *Left Turn Magazine*. All funds raised will go to *Sista ii Sista & Left Turn Magazine*.
Community Service Society, 105 E 22nd St. (at Park Ave.)

SAT OCT 29

12pm – just after dusk • FREE
2ND ANNUAL HALLOWEEN REALLY REALLY FREE MARKET
Dress up in your CRAZIEST Halloween garb! Best costume wins the best pumpkin pie you've ever had! And it's vegan! Swap goods, share skills, eat food, hang out, dance, sing and have fun-all for free!
St. Marks Church (2nd Ave, betw. 10th and 11th Sts.)

SUN OCT 30

3pm-4pm • FREE
NOT YOUR RUN OF THE MILL TOURS

Leaving from and returning to 120 Broadway, 8th Floor Studios. Each tour limited to 25 people, first come, first served.
PERIPHERAL CITY
Guides in orange jumpsuits lead these performance-walking tours, entwining personal stories from people on the street with unusual historical facts about the narrow, cavernous streets of the financial district.
AN OFFBEAT WALKING TOUR
This interactive group exploration will survey a selection of Lower Manhattan blocks to discover their leading features, patterns and personalities. Bring keen eyes, a pencil and an inquisitive step.
NEW YORK TIMES PERFORMANCE TOUR
Based on images collected from the *New York Times* of people grieving, Pia Lindman leads a one-hour performance tour of select monuments in Battery Park, part of After Effects.

MON OCT 31

7pm-9pm • FREE
VILLAGE HALLOWEEN PARADE
More than 2 million spectators and 45,000 participants. "It's the largest public participatory event in the greatest city in the world."
From Spring St. to 23rd St. along 6th Ave.
www.halloween-nyc.com

TUE NOV 1

6pm-8pm (Every Tuesday) • FREE
SALSA DANCE LESSONS at Dance On-2 Studios (+ Free Hot Buffet!)
Copacabana, 560 W. 34th St. (at 11th Ave.) (212) 239-COPA

WED NOV 2

7pm-9:30pm • \$10; \$8 students
SNEAK PREVIEW of GAY SEX IN THE 70s
Joseph Lovett's *If it Feels Good, Do It!* landmark documentary. Advance ticket purchase recommended, available at front desk and at 212-689-6337 x115.
Museum of Sex, 233 Fifth Ave. (at 27th St.)

COPS ARE ROBBERS



ALL IN A DAY'S WORK: New York's Finest seized about 20 bicycles at the Bedford Ave. L station in Williamsburg on Oct. 5. Some bikes were locked to subway entrance railings; others were locked to nearby sign posts, which is not illegal. "I don't know if the local precinct commander was feeling bored," one observer wrote on nyc.indymedia.org, "but what I saw served no purpose." Another reader added, "why should it be illegal to lock those bikes to street side entrances? Those entrances are ideal, the seam between two great forms of responsible urban transportation."

PHOTOS: NYC.INDYMEDIA.ORG

FEMA Flubs Indian Point Plan

FED'S NAKED DISASTER PLAN: MORE TOLL BOOTH OPERATORS ON I-87

BY ALEX MATTHIESSEN

Americans were rightly angered; first by the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) inept response to Hurricane Katrina, and then by the chaotic evacuation of Houston before Hurricane Rita, in which as many as 2.5 million people were stranded on highways that had become parking lots.

Those colossal planning failures should prompt a re-examination of the agency's assurances about the feasibility of the emergency plan for the Indian Point nuclear power plant, located in Westchester County about 35 miles from Times Square. An investigation is all the more appropriate since the authorities who approved the emergency plan are Joe Allbaugh and Michael Brown, two of the discredited bureaucrats responsible for the agency's botched response to Hurricane Katrina.

Before 9/11, the agency identified a terrorist attack on New York and a hurricane in New Orleans as two of the most likely disasters that could befall our nation. Any credible list of possible terrorist targets in New York would include Indian Point, which, as the 9/11 Commission Report revealed, may have been on the original hit list for the 2001 attacks. Moreover, casual observation of the power plant, buttressed by various government and company reports, reveals that Indian Point is virtually undefended against an attack by water or air.

Indian Point's license requires its owners to demonstrate that there is a workable evacuation plan in place. In an exhaustive, 270-page report on Indian Point's emergency preparedness, James Lee Witt, a former FEMA director, criticized virtually every aspect of the plan and concluded that Indian Point's disaster response system is not adequate to protect the public from radiation releases.

Witt said that Indian Point's emergency plan does "not consider the possible ramifi-

cations of a terrorist-caused event." He emphasized that an evacuation in the event of an attack would be impossible given the area's congested roads, population density and the near certainty that New Yorkers far outside the 10-mile evacuation zone would try to flee, thus confounding the evacuation of people closer to the plant. It doesn't take an expert to know that few of the 20 million people living within a 50-mile radius of the plant would just wait around for officials to tell them whether or not they and their families could be exposed to radiation.

With the exception of FEMA, nearly everyone who has investigated Indian Point's emergency evacuation plan has concluded that it would not work. This includes most of the government officials and more than 200 first responders — police officers, firefighters, bus drivers, schoolteachers and hospital workers — charged with executing the plan. Three of the four county governments (Orange, Rockland and Westchester) and the State of New York have refused to certify the plan as adequate to protect public health and safety. More than 400 politicians — including 11 members of Congress — and 500 local businesses have called for the plant's closing, citing, among other things, Indian Point's patently unworkable emergency plan.

Yet in 2003, despite overwhelming evidence that the plan was fatally flawed, Allbaugh and Brown approved it, prompting Sue Kelly, a Republican congresswoman

from Westchester, to accuse the agency of "bureaucratic rubber stamping in its most grotesque and dangerous form."

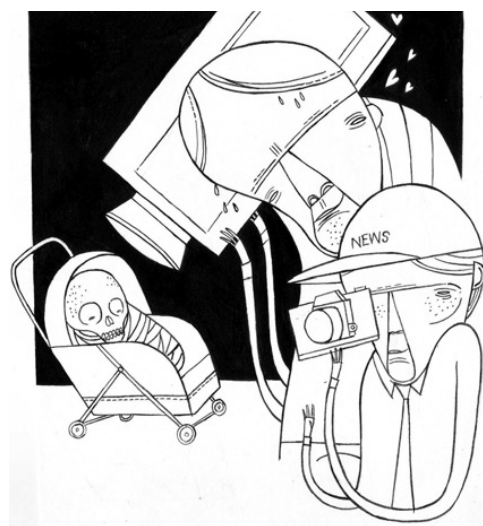
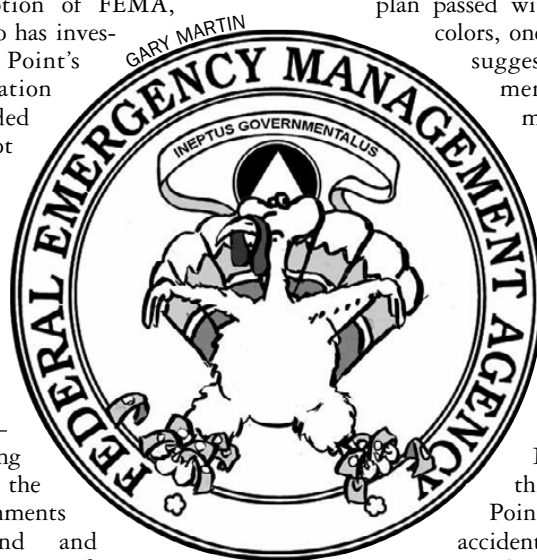
Last year, in response to an outcry from the public and politicians, FEMA promised to improve its biennial drill assessing emergency preparedness by subjecting Indian Point to a mock terrorist attack. But the agency, by assuming that the attack simulated in the mock scenario would not result in a release of radiation, might as well have been testing emergency preparedness at a local shopping mall.

In a Sept. 2002 drill, in which the hapless plan passed with practically flying colors, one of the agency's few suggestions for improvement was to deploy more toll booth operators on Interstate 87 to handle increased traffic.

It seems that, in approving Indian Point's plans for evacuation, Brown placed the same kind of bet that caused the fiasco in New Orleans — in this case, that Indian Point will not suffer an accident or terrorist attack on this administration's watch.

Now that Allbaugh and Brown are gone, New York's leaders from both political parties should demand a rescinding of Indian Point's emergency plan approval and an independent investigation into FEMA's unsubstantiated decision to certify what the rest of us know is a bad, potentially disastrous, joke.

Alex Matthiessen is the executive director of Riverkeeper, an environmental advocacy group.



NIK MOORE www.maladroitdrone.org

BLOOMIE'S SUBWAY HOAX

BY STEVEN WISHNIA

How likely is it that the great subway-bomb scare of Oct. 6 was orchestrated by Mayor Bloomberg to deflect attention from his refusal to show up for that night's campaign debate?

I don't normally go for conspiracy theories, but this one's plausible. Bloomberg's campaign so far has taken the attitude that he's running essentially unopposed, that Democrat Fernando Ferrer is a pathetic schmuck with no hope of winning. Bloomberg also hasn't forgotten that the city is 5-to-1 Democratic and roughly half Black and Latino. If these voters get riled up about his plutocratic policies (Ferrer, stuck in the classic Democratic dilemma of trying to excite working-class, Black and Latino voters without alienating big-money contributors or alarming the city's corporate media, hasn't done much on that front), the mayor could be in trouble. On a slow news day, Bloomberg's refusal to show up for the debate at the Apollo Theatre, with its overtones of arrogance, cowardice and racism, could have set something off.

So the mayor and Police Commissioner Ray Kelly pluck a rumor out of the chatter and go public with a "terrorist threat." They flooded the city with warnings that "up to 19 terrorists" were planning to attack the subways with bombs in strollers or baby carriages. The result: Instead of the big story of the day being Freddy Ferrer debating an empty chair, it was al-Qaeda's fiendish stroller-bomb plot. The city's establishment and many of its people reacted with a predictable loss of bowel control; the *Daily News* was so outraged that they sent a young woman reporter into the subways with a babyless stroller AND SHE DIDN'T GET SEARCHED EVEN ONCE!

If this had been a genuine, concrete threat, we could see the better-safe-than-sorry argument. But the "specific" information touted by Bloomberg and Kelly came from a fairly questionable Iraqi informant; the alleged plotters turned out to be stuck in Iraq with neither passports nor plane tickets. Even George Bush's Department of Homeland Security didn't consider this threat credible.

What makes the timing especially suspicious is that Bloomberg and Kelly have a history of putting out phony scare stories for political advantage. When they were trying to justify their plans to suppress the protests at the Republican convention last year, they spent the summer leaking absurd tales of anarchist plots, and the corporate press lapped them up. Anyone remember how anarchists were going to sabotage the city's power lines by throwing bags of metal filings at them? Or how Weather Underground bombers were going to come out of retirement for the protests, like the Jefferson Airplane doing a reunion tour?

GAIL ASKA
1945-2005

Champion
of the Poor,
Dies at 60



MICHELLE PEREZ

Gail Aska, a co-founder of Community Voices Heard, passed away on Oct. 11 at the age of 60. The Bronx native was a champion of the rights of mothers on welfare, low-income women of color and other disenfranchised people. For over 12 years she worked with Community Voices Heard, a community activist organization composed primarily of women on welfare, as well as Hunger Action of New York State, the Welfare Law Center, Sister Circle and the New York Women's Foundation. Aska was a recipient of the Changing World Award, as well as a Revson Fellowship. She is survived by her son Kameron Bryant, and her granddaughter Persia.

Charas: The Battle Continues

BY AUGUST LEPPMEYER

A ruling on Oct. 19 by New York City's Board of Standards and Appeals may provide a turning point in the almost decade-long struggle over the fate of the Charas building site. Located near Tompkins Square Park, the former Public School 64 had been used as a community center for many years, until developer Gregg Singer purchased it at a 1998 city auction for \$3.15 million.

If the Board rules in Singer's favor, he may finally be able to move ahead with his proposal to construct a 19-story building, with 222 dorm units on the site. Recently, the Department of Buildings rejected his attempt to build, citing a requirement for the developer to abide by community use stipulations in the property's deed. Thus far, Singer has had no takers for his dormitory proposal among any of the colleges in the area.

City Councilwoman Margarita Lopez, representing the neighborhood, said that such a building, "would destroy the character of the neighborhood."

Singer recently tried to sell the property on the public market, for an asking price between \$50 million and \$70 million. Lopez argued that his attempt to sell the property "shows that the community is winning" the struggle. A ruling against him by the Board would be a significant further setback.

The range of uses that Lopez envisions for the building include: a day care center, a social services center, a senior center, or a community theater, "where children can appreciate the theatrical work of Shakespeare or Calderon de la Barca." Susan Stetzer, District Manager of Manhattan Community Board 3, noted such past uses of the site as a community meeting center and an artists' space.

Related to the conflict over whether to convert the building into a 19-story dormitory, community activists secured a victory in restricting building heights in the East Village. On Sept. 27, the community board voted unanimously in favor of recommending "contextual zoning," which would restrict construction to prevailing East Village building heights of about five or six stories. Stetzer said that even newer residents are supporting contextual zoning. "They moved here because they were attracted to the character of the neighborhood."



HARRIET MIERS: Pit Bull or Lap Dog?

BY ANN SCHNEIDER

Alexander Hamilton wrote in *The Federalist Papers* that the reason for requiring the advice and consent of the Senate would be to keep the nominees to the Supreme Court from being so pliant as "to render them the obsequious instruments of the President's pleasure."

Hamilton thought a president would be "both ashamed and afraid" to bring to the Senate nominees with only personal alliances as credentials.

How then, Ms. Harriet Miers? Her nomination has sparked a rebellion among Bush's base, with her lack of judicial experience and her lack of solid conservative credentials.

Who is Harriet Miers? At her large Dallas law firm, her clients included Microsoft, Ford, Citibank and Walt Disney Co. She is an evangelical Christian who never married and socializes with Ann Veneman and Condi Rice. Although she was the first woman president of the State Bar of Texas, she is a product of segregated schools and left the Dallas city council after her side lost a fight to amplify minority voting power.

She has never served as a judge but became staff secretary to President Bush in 2001 and White House Counsel in 2004. She introduced Alberto Gonzales to Bush in 1992 and replaced him as Counsel when Gonzales became Attorney General. She served as Bush's personal attorney in a land dispute and gave \$20,000 to his race for re-election as Governor and later \$5,000 to the Bush-Cheney Recount Fund.

Moreover, Ms. Miers was paid \$19,000 in 1999 to help then Governor Bush to anticipate hard questions, such as whether he received help getting out of the draft and into the National Guard.

She defended the Bush-Cheney ticket in a Florida lawsuit that nearly disqualified them for violating the 12th Amendment, which prohibits two residents of the same state (Texas) from forming a presidential-vice presidential team.

After Miers' 1995 appointment as chair of the Texas Lottery Commission, it was revealed that former Lt. Governor Ben Barnes who lobbied for the creation of the state lottery, gave himself a four percent kickback. In response, she hired a new executive director, Lawrence Littwin, to clean house.

Littwin says he was fired after just four months on the job because he started looking into Barnes and illegal campaign contributions. Littwin sued GTech, Barnes' company, for wrongful interference and was awarded \$300,000. He attempted to subpoena Miers, but she fought it and won in federal court.

Littwin was more successful in questioning Barnes about his role in approaching a National Guard commander on behalf of the Bush family. Barnes has said he regrets helping Bush avoid military service, but he will no longer talk to the press. The settlement prohibits Littwin from speaking about the case, but said he would testify before Miers' Senate confirmation hearings if asked. The Judiciary Committee should be sure to invite him.

The People's Lawyer is a project of the National Lawyers Guild, NYC Chapter. Contact the chapter at www.nlgny.org or at (212) 679-6018.

New Orleans

NO RETURN

NEW ORLEANS' POOR NOT WELCOME

The poor, the sick, the disabled, the prisoners, the low-wage workers of New Orleans, were all left behind in the evacuation. Now that New Orleans is re-opening for some, the same people are being left behind again.

BY BILL QUIGLEY

When those in power close the public schools, close public housing, fire people from their jobs, refuse to provide access to affordable public health care, and close off all avenues for justice, it is not necessary to erect a sign outside of New Orleans saying "Poor People Not Allowed To Return." People cannot come back in these circumstances and that is exactly what is happening.

There are 28,000 people still living in shelters in Louisiana. There are 38,000 public housing apartments in New Orleans, many in good physical condition. None have been reopened. The National Low Income Housing Coalition estimated that 112,000 low-income homes in New Orleans were damaged by the hurricane. Yet, local, state and federal authorities are not committed to re-opening public housing.

New Orleans public schools enrolled about 60,000 children before the hurricane. The school board president now estimates that no schools on the city's east bank, where the overwhelming majority of people live, will reopen this academic school year. Every one of the 13 public schools on the mostly dry west bank of New Orleans was changed into a charter school in an afternoon meeting in early October.

The City of New Orleans laid off 3,000 workers. The public school system laid off thousands of its workers. The Archdiocese of New Orleans laid off 800 workers from its central staff and countless hundreds of others from its parish schools. The Housing Authority has laid off its workers. The St. Bernard Sheriff's Office laid off half of its workers.



New Orleans residents face an uncertain future. PHOTO: EDGAR MATA

Renters in New Orleans are returning to find their furniture on the street and strangers living in their apartments at higher rents – despite an order by the governor that no one can be evicted before Oct. 25. Rent in the dry areas has doubled and tripled.

Environmental chemist Wilma Subra cautions that earth and air in the New Orleans area appear to be heavily polluted with heavy metal and organic contaminants from more than 40 oil spills and extensive mold. The people, Subra stated, are subject to "double insult – the chemical insult from the sludge and biological insult from the mold."

The Charity Hospital of New Orleans, the primary place for free comprehensive medical care in the state of Louisiana, may never re-open. Right now, free public health care is being provided by volunteers at grassroots free clinics like Common Ground – a wonderful and much-needed effort but not a substitute for public health care.

The jails and prisons are full and staying full. Despite orders to release prisoners, state and local corrections officials are not releasing them unless someone can transport them out of town. Lawyers have to file lawsuits to force authorities to release people who have already served all of their sentences.

Judges are setting \$100,000 bonds for people who steal beer out of a vacant house, while landlords break the law with impunity. People arrested before and after the hurricane have not even been formally charged by the prosecutor. Yet timid judges are reluctant to follow the constitution and laws and release them on reasonable bond.

People are making serious money in this hurricane but not the working and

poor people who built and maintained New Orleans. The Small Business Administration has received 1.6 million disaster loan applications and has approved nine in Louisiana. According to Newhouse News Service, "Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., said he had been informed that 75 Louisiana electricians employed at the Naval Air Station in Belle Chasse were told that their jobs are being eliminated now that the work is being switched to ... Halliburton Corp. Levin also said that maintenance workers at the New Orleans Superdome who were paid \$15 an hour with benefits are losing their jobs to 'out-of-state workers who agree to work for \$12 an hour with no benefits.'"

Take it to the courts, you say? The Louisiana Supreme Court has been closed since the hurricane and is not due to reopen until at least Oct. 25.

While Texas and Mississippi have enacted special rules to allow out-of-state lawyers to come and help people out, the Louisiana Supreme court has not. Nearly every person victimized by the hurricane has a price-gouging story. Yet, the Louisiana attorney general has filed exactly one suit for price-gouging – against a campground. Likewise, the U.S. attorney has prosecuted three people for wrongfully seeking \$2,000 FEMA checks.

No schools. No low-income apartments. No jobs. No healthcare. No justice.

You saw the people who were left behind last time. The same people are being left behind all over again. You raised hell last time. Please do it again.

Bill Quigley is a professor of law at Loyola University New Orleans where he directs the Gillis Long Poverty Law Center. This article originally appeared at commondreams.org.

HELP US FIND A NEW OFFICE

The New York City Independent Media Center
needs a new office after November. *If you can help*, please call:

212.684.8112, or email imc-nyc@indymedia.org

HOW CLIMATE WILL CHANGE THE FACE OF THE PLANET

Thresholds, Switches, Amplifiers & Chaos

BY MIKE DAVIS

The genesis of two consecutive category-five hurricanes (Katrina and Rita) over the Gulf of Mexico is an unprecedented and troubling occurrence. But for most tropical meteorologists the truly astonishing “storm of the decade” took place in March 2004. Hurricane Catarina – so named because it made landfall in the southern Brazilian state of Santa Catarina – was the first recorded south Atlantic hurricane in history.

Textbook orthodoxy had long excluded the possibility of such an event; sea temperatures, experts claimed, were too low and wind shear too powerful to allow tropical depressions to evolve into cyclones south of the Atlantic Equator. Indeed, forecasters rubbed their eyes in disbelief as weather satellite images displayed the classical whirling disc with a well-formed eye in these forbidden latitudes.

Researchers have debated the origin and significance of Catarina. A crucial question is this: Was Catarina simply a rare event at the outlying edge of the normal bell curve of South Atlantic weather or was it a “threshold” event, signaling some fundamental and abrupt change of state in the planet’s climate system?

Scientific discussions of environmental change and global warming have long been haunted by the specter of nonlinearity. Climate models, like econometric models, are easiest to build and understand when they are simple linear extrapolations of well-quantified past behavior, when causes maintain a consistent proportionality to their effects.

But all the major components of global climate – air, water, ice, and vegetation – are actually nonlinear. At certain thresholds they can switch from one state of organization to another, with catastrophic consequences for species too finely tuned to the old norms. Until

the early 1990s, however, it was generally believed that these major climate transitions took centuries, if not millennia, to accomplish. Now, thanks to the decoding of subtle signatures in ice cores and sea-bottom sediments, we know that global temperatures and ocean circulation can, under the right circumstances, change abruptly – in a decade or even less.

The paradigmatic example is the so-called “Younger Dryas” event, which took place 12,800 years ago. An ice dam collapsed, releasing an immense volume of meltwater from the shrinking Laurentian ice-sheet into the Atlantic Ocean via the instantly created St. Lawrence River. This “freshening” of the North Atlantic suppressed the northward conveyance of warm water by the Gulf Stream and plunged Europe back into a thousand-year ice age.

Abrupt switching mechanisms in the climate system – such as relatively small changes in ocean salinity – are augmented by causal loops that act as amplifiers. Perhaps the most famous example is sea-ice albedo. The vast expanses of white, frozen Arctic Ocean ice reflect heat back into space, thus providing positive feedback for cooling trends. Alternatively, shrinking sea-ice increases heat absorption, accelerating both its own further melting and planetary warming.

Thresholds, switches, amplifiers, chaos – contemporary geophysics assumes that earth history is inherently revolutionary. This is why many prominent researchers – especially those who study topics like ice-sheet stability and North Atlantic circulation – have always had qualms about the consensus projections of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the world authority on global warming.

In contrast to Bushite flat-Earthers and shills for the oil industry, their skepticism has been founded on fears that the IPCC models fail to adequately allow for catastrophic nonlinearities like the Younger Dryas. Where other researchers model the late-21st-century climate that our children will live with upon the precedents of the Altithermal (the hottest phase of the current Holocene period, 8000 years ago) or the Eemian (the previous, even warmer interglacial episode, 120,000 years ago), growing numbers of geophysicists toy with the possibilities of runaway warming returning the earth to the torrid chaos of the Paleocene-Eocene Thermal Maximum (PETM: 55 million years ago) when the extreme and rapid heating of the oceans led to massive extinctions.

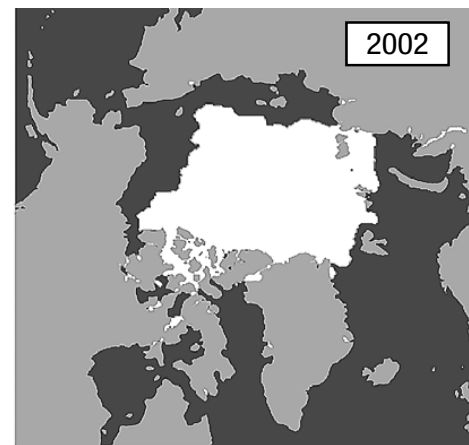
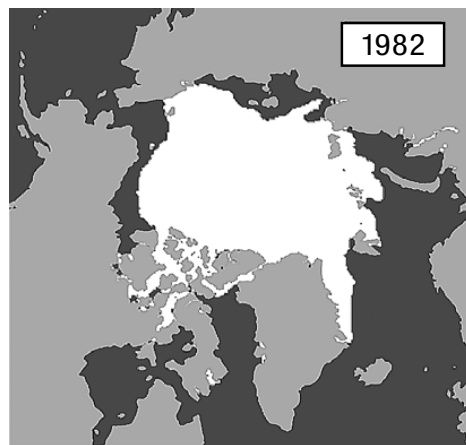
Dramatic new evidence has emerged recently that we may be headed, if not back to the dread, almost inconceivable PETM, then to a much harder landing than envisioned by the IPCC.

As I flew toward Louisiana and the carnage of Katrina recently, I found myself reading the Aug. 23 issue of *EOS*, the newsletter of the American Geophysical Union. I was pole-axed by an article entitled “Arctic System on Trajectory to New, Seasonally Ice-Free State,” co-authored by 21 scientists from almost as many universities and research institutes. Walking among the ruins of the Lower Ninth Ward, I found myself worrying more about the *EOS* article than the disaster surrounding me.

The article begins with a recounting of familiar trends. For almost 30 years, Arctic sea ice has been thinning and shrinking so

dramatically that “a summer ice-free Arctic Ocean within a century is a real possibility.” The scientists, however, add a new observation – that this process is probably irreversible. “Surprisingly, it is difficult to identify a single feedback mechanism within the Arctic that has the potency or speed to alter the system’s present course.”

An ice-free Arctic Ocean has not existed for at least 1 million years, and the authors warn that the Earth is inexorably headed toward a



Sea ice extent (white) at the end of summer in 1982 and 2002 observed with passive microwave satellite sensors. The record minimum extent was observed in 2002, but that record was nearly equaled in 2003 and 2004. From *EOS*, THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AMERICAN GEOPHYSICAL UNION

“super-interglacial” state “outside the envelope of glacial-interglacial fluctuations that prevailed during recent Earth history.” They emphasize that within a century global warming will probably exceed the Eemian temperature maximum and thus obviate all the models that have made this their essential scenario. They also suggest that the total or partial collapse of the Greenland Ice Sheet is a real possibility – an event that would definitely throw a Younger Dryas wrench into the Gulf Stream.

If they are right, then we are living on the climate equivalent of a runaway train that is picking up speed as it passes the stations marked “Altithermal” and “Eemian.” “Outside the envelope,” moreover, means that we are not only leaving behind the serendipitous climatic parameters of the Holocene – the last 10,000 years of mild, warm weather that have favored the explosive growth of agriculture and urban civilization – but also those of the late Pleistocene that fostered the evolution of *Homo sapiens* in eastern Africa.

Other researchers undoubtedly will contest the extraordinary conclusions of the *EOS* article and – we must hope – suggest the existence of countervailing forces to this scenario of an Arctic albedo catastrophe. But for the time being, at least, research on global

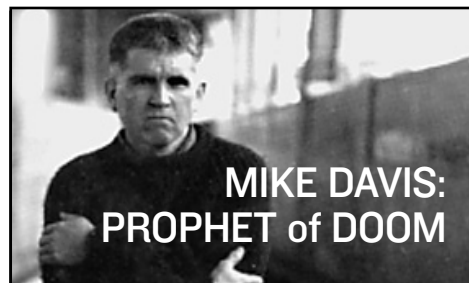
change is pointing toward worst-case scenarios.

All of this, of course, is a perverse tribute to industrial capitalism and extractive imperialism as geological forces so formidable that they have succeeded in scarcely more than two centuries – indeed, mainly in the last 50 years – in knocking the earth off its climatic pedestal and propelling it toward the nonlinear unknown.

The demon in me wants to say, “Party and make merry. No need now to worry about Kyoto, recycling your aluminum cans, or using too much toilet paper, when, soon enough, we’ll be debating how many hunter-gathers can survive in the scorching deserts of New England or the tropical forests of the Yukon.”

The good parent in me, however, screams, “How is it possible that we can now contemplate with scientific seriousness whether our children’s children will themselves have children?” Let Exxon answer that in one of their sanctimonious ads.

Mike Davis is the author of City of Quartz and Monster at Our Door: The Global Threat of Avian Flu as well as the forthcoming Planet of Slums. This article originally appeared at tomdispatch.com



MIKE DAVIS:
PROPHET of DOOM

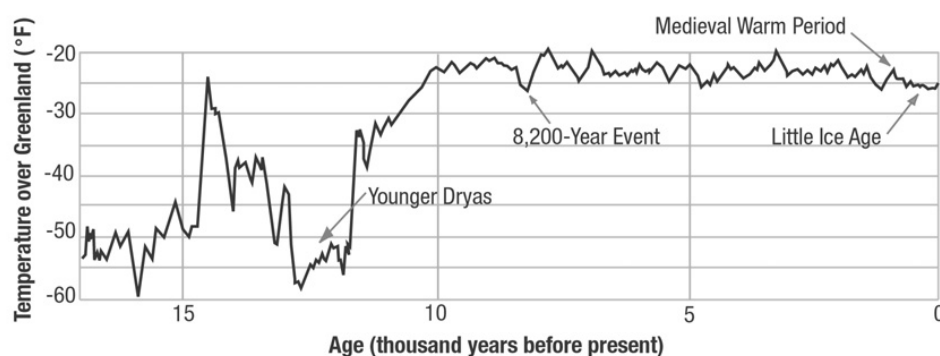
While one critic calls him “Michael Moore in a lab coat,” Mike Davis has been uncannily accurate of late in anticipating catastrophes. Writing after Hurricane Ivan narrowly missed New Orleans in September 2004, he spotted a key flaw in the evacuation plan: “The evacuation of New Orleans in the face of Hurricane Ivan,” he said, “looked sinisterly like Strom Thurmond’s version of the Rapture. Affluent white people fled the Big Easy in their SUVs, while the old and car-less – mainly Black – were left behind in their below-sea-level shotgun shacks and aging tenements to face the watery wrath.”

His latest book on the Avian flu virus has anticipated the growing consensus in the medical establishment that the disease will eventually mutate and be capable of killing millions.

His next book, due out in 2006, focuses on the perils of the world’s mega-slums.

—JOHN TARLETON

A LONG RECORD OF ABRUPT CLIMATE CHANGES



(R.B. Alley, from *The Two-Mile Time Machine*, 2000). WOODS HOLE OCEANOGRAPHIC INSTITUTION

counter recruitment



Police and students clash during a raucous Sept. 29 antiwar protest at Holyoke (MA) Community College. PHOTO: CAMPUSANTIWAR.NET

Protest 101

Students trying to protest next to military recruitings have been treated harshly on several college campuses this fall. Perhaps the most intriguing incident occurred Sept. 29 at Holyoke Community College (HCC) in western Massachusetts when a group of 30 counter-recruiters were maced by about 20 local and state police while protesting near an Army National Guard recruiting table. The nation's 1,157 community colleges are both a favorite destination of military recruiters and notoriously difficult to organize because of their transient student bodies. HCC has over 6,200 students, 25 percent of color

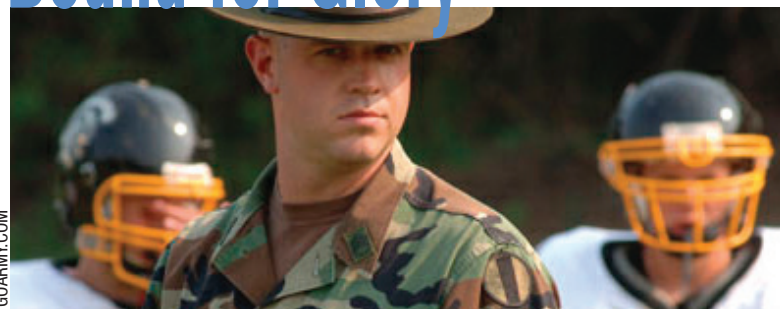
and many from Holyoke, one of the poorest cities in Massachusetts and with a 50 percent Latino population.

"It's okay for Amherst or Hampshire College to have politics," Holyoke sophomore Charles Peterson told *The Nation*. "But once working-class students start protesting, then state cops in riot gear get called in."

Organizers of the HCC Anti-War Coalition say they were inspired to form their group following the June 2003 suicide of James Lacey, a former Holyoke Community College student who participated in the invasion of Iraq.

—JT

Bound for Glory



"Whatever I can do to help, I'm here to do," says Drill Sergeant Alex Self.

Sgt. Self, however, isn't stationed in Iraq or Ft. Jackson, South Carolina, where he previously prepared recruits for the rigors of military life. Instead, he's been cast in a supporting role alongside Hall-of-Fame linebacker Dick Butkus in a reality TV show about a small-town high school football team that's trying to change its losing ways.

"Bound for Glory," which airs on ESPN Tuesday nights, follows the ups and downs of the Montour (Pa.) Spartans, which finished last season with a 1-8 record. Butkus and former Denver Broncos cornerback Ray Crockett are the coaches while Self is in charge of physical and mental conditioning. Perhaps it's just coincidence, but the rural town where the show takes place is fertile ground for military recruiters.

Self, who paces the practice field in full military uniform, including his Smokey the Bear drill sergeant's hat, is currently featured on the goarmy.com website. In his weekly journal he never misses a chance to note the similarities between football and the Army, including the fact that soldiers and football players both drink a lot of water. He also makes the best of his chance to talk up the Army.

"One thing I find interesting," he writes, "is that they [the players] are absolutely curious about the Army. I get questions like, 'Have you ever killed anyone? Have you ever killed anyone with your bare hands?' They don't understand what we actually do. It's a good opportunity to tell them what we really do."

—JT

Counter Curriculum

BY JOHN TARLETON



DAVID HOLLENBACH

to see that recruiters are predators who don't belong in our schools and our communities."

Here in New York, as elsewhere, the movement's progress has been painstakingly incremental. In August, the city's Department of Education (DOE) agreed after two years of protests to distribute "opt-out" forms in class to high school juniors and seniors who face having their personal information given to military recruiters under a provision of the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act. Previously, opt-out forms were only sent in the mail to parents.

"The fact they are trying to organize it is a major step forward," says David Tykulsker of Brooklyn Parents for Peace. "Before, it was every school can do it right, then other school districts can do it right too... We think we can push other school districts that say they are too big or unwieldy to fully protect their student's privacy rights to do so."

Hoping to build on the success of the opt-out campaign, many counter-recruiters are restlessly looking for other ways to make an impact. A coalition of local peace groups has a resolution before the City Council Education Committee

The renewed surge in counter-recruiting comes at a time when the Army is trying to rebound from its worst recruiting year in over a quarter century.

Gram says New York's efforts can be duplicated elsewhere. "If the biggest school district in the country can do it right, then other school districts can do it right too... We think we can push other school districts that say they are too big or unwieldy to fully protect their student's privacy rights to do so."

Hoping to build on the success of the opt-out campaign, many counter-recruiters are restlessly looking for other ways to make an impact. A coalition of local peace groups has a resolution before the City Council Education Committee

and the Panel for Educational Policy (the successor to the former city school board) that would restrict the movements of recruiters inside schools and guarantee equal access to pro- and anti-recruitment messages. "Have you ever seen a recruiter from Yale or Harvard have the run of a school, including the gym and the library?" asks Jim Murphy, an administrator at West Side High School in Manhattan. "It's ludicrous."

REMEMBERING VIETNAM

Others like Dayl Wise are taking a more direct approach. He and Murphy (who is also a Vietnam vet) will speak at about 25 high schools this fall. "I'm trying to reach the kids in the back row, because that's where I sat—in the back row," Wise said recently before speaking to a 12th-grade English class at West Side High. A ripple of unease moved through the room when Murphy described sitting up with mortally wounded Marines who had chunks of their brains blown away and were waiting to die, and again when Wise described the putrid smells of the veterans hospital where he recuperated from a serious leg wound.

"I want you to have a plan. Do you have a plan?" Wise asked, moving toward a student who was nodding off in the back of class.

"No."

"Get a plan," Wise snapped. "I don't want you to end up in the hospital like me."

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

While adults continue to play a crucial role in the counter-recruiting movement, Theberge is optimistic that young people will increasingly emerge as its leaders.

"The conversation is going to be much more real. It's going to be about youth taking back control of their lives, not adults coming in and saving them."

For Juan Antigua that means starting a counterrecruiting group at DeWitt Clinton High School that will allow students to talk to other students about military recruiters and their promises. "They will tell you anything," he says. For the YA-YA (Youth Activists Youth Allies) Network, it means organizing an alternative career fair early in 2006 that will give students access to information about vocational trade schools, college prep, financial aid, Americorps and overseas volunteer opportunities.

"We need to provide alternatives instead of just telling them [other students] not to go into the military," says Raymond Cyrille, 17, a YA-YA organizer who attends Mt. St. Michael High School in the Bronx. In Bushwick, 18 students from the El Puente Peace and Justice Academy have been canvassing since the summer to warn about deceptive recruiting practices and to spread the word about non-military options for youth.

Theberge is facilitating regional youth leadership training camps around the country this fall. The most recent one, held in Voluntown, Connecticut from Oct. 8-10, brought together about 35 youth activists from around New England, two-thirds of which were working-class youth of color who live in urban centers. On Nov. 17, the National Youth and Student Peace Coalition will hold a nationwide "Not Your Soldier" day of counter-recruiting actions and speakouts.

"The vision is that a year from now we can hold a national week-long camp," Theberge says. "We want to build a national youth movement against the war led by youth who are most affected by it."

With Iraq serving as the most powerful antiwar message of all, the counter-recruiting movement is likely to grow stronger over the next couple of years. Some organizers see that as only the beginning of a much larger task.

"The system that produced the war still needs to be changed," says Oscar Castro, Director of the American Friends Service Committee's National Youth and Militarism Program. "We can have a great impact on this war. But by design, our work is intended to end U.S. militarism around the world and here in the U.S."

For more news on the counter-recruiting movement, see counterrecruiter.net



PHOTO: ERICA THOMPSON

"No Way, We Won't Pay"

BY ERIN THOMPSON

"I intentionally lived on the edge of poverty to avoid paying for the war machine," said Ruth Clark, a slightly hunched-over elderly woman wearing a pin on her pink lapel that read, "Ask me about Resisting War Taxes."

A former missionary with the United Methodist Church, Clark was among 60 attendees at the National War Tax Resisters Coordinating Committee (NWTRCC) strategy conference. The conference, held Oct. 7-9 in Brooklyn's St. Vincent Ferrer Church, sought to provide information and support to war tax resisters and to develop strategies on how to help war tax resistance gain political momentum and garner more supporters within the antiwar movement.

The premise of war tax resistance is simple: Those who do not support wars perpetuated and funded by the U.S. government should not pay for them. For fiscal year 2005, the federal government raised \$927 billion in individual income taxes, in comparison to \$278 billion in corporate taxes. Half of the government's \$840 billion in discretionary expenditures (\$419.3 billion) for fiscal year 2006 has been allocated for the Defense Department. This does not include another \$49.1 billion in supplemental funding for wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. With the total bill for the Iraq War surpassing \$250 billion, the progressive think-tank, Institute for Policy Studies, puts the cost of the war in Iraq at about \$2,900 for a family of four.

"I just will not pay for killing," said Ed Hedemann, who was one of the original organizers of NWTRCC in 1982, and who has refused to pay the \$65,000 in federal taxes that have accrued since he first became a war tax resister in 1970. "I refused induction into the military in 1969," he explained. "I thought, 'It's good to refuse induction to fight in a war, it's consistent to not pay taxes for someone else to enter into the military.'"

Some war tax resisters intentionally earn less than the taxable income; others avoid payroll taxes by working off the books or through self-employment. Some don't file at all, while some file but refuse to pay part or all of the owed federal taxes. Hedemann still pays state and local taxes, as well as Medicare and Social

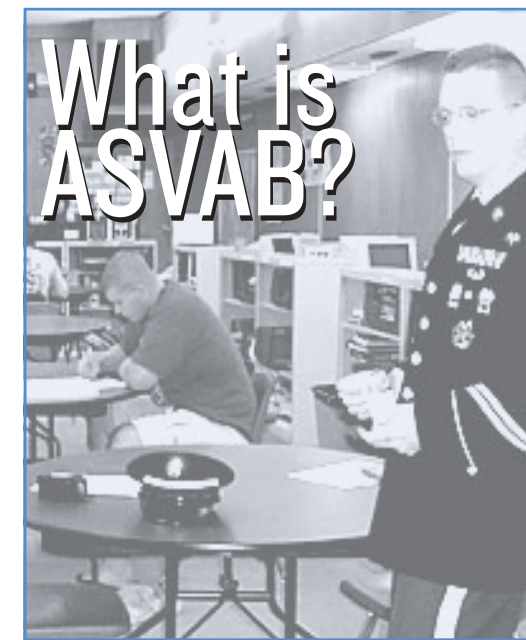
Security. He files a federal tax return and instead of sending the money to the IRS puts it into causes that he feels are under-funded by the government.

All war tax resisters face the threat of loss of property, garnishment of wages and even jail. In 1999 Hedemann was taken to a federal district court in Brooklyn by the U.S. Justice Department under order to give information to the IRS on his assets. When Bob Bady, who hasn't filed a tax return since he was 18, had his wages as a nurse garnished by the IRS, he quit his job. "I told the hospital it didn't make sense to work to heal people to pay for hurting people," Bady said. In 1989 Bady's house was seized and sold in an auction by the IRS.

Clark stopped filing tax returns in the early 1970s, but lived mostly below the taxable income level for years. Any extra income she did make, she put into a non-taxable Individual Retirement Account (IRA). When she recently liquidated her IRA and invested it in a project that makes small loans to third world women, her tax burden was raised significantly.

"I had the check in my hands for less than 24 hours, but it made my income for that year higher than it had ever been," she said. She filed a return for that year and withheld 47 cents of every dollar she owed — a penny, she said, for every percentage point devoted to military spending. It was then that the IRS began sending her threatening letters. Eventually, the government put a lien on her savings and checking accounts and drained the balances. The IRS is now threatening to take part of her Social Security. Well into retirement age, Clark's only income comes from Social Security and her pension from the United Methodist Church.

Although Clark initially considered her war tax resistance a moral act, and not a political one, her recent experiences motivated her to share her resistance. She hopes that "by my sharing, someone else is strengthened to say I'll do it. I won't pay for war."



While the counter-recruiting movement focuses on opt-out forms and limiting recruiter access to students in school, a widely used "career exploration program" developed by and for the military goes largely unchallenged.

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) ostensibly exists to help vocational-minded students select a trade, but is largely geared to helping the military target potential recruits. The test is offered for free to high schools and community colleges, and 1.25 million senior and juniors in about 14,000 high schools take the test each year, according to Tod Ensign, author of *America's Military Today*. Test results provide recruiters with far more extensive personal information — name, address, phone number, age, sex, grade, test score, analysis of aptitude and interests, as well as information about the students' plans after graduation — than the basic contact information high schools are required to hand over under the No Child Left Behind Act.

"Your ASVAB program is the seed from which the best leads will come," notes an Army recruiting manual. "Many recruiters have already discovered that mandatory ASVAB testing can convert a very difficult task into a pleasurable project." —JT



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A U.S. gunship flies by the Um Al-Qura Sunni mosque in Baghdad. PHOTO: AJC.COM

IRAQ'S OILY REFERENDUM

BY A.K. GUPTA

With the passage of its constitution in a nationwide vote, Iraq's transition is now complete: not into a democratic bellwether for the Middle East but into ground zero for a civil war that threatens to ignite a regional conflagration.

Predicting as much before the vote, Saudi Arabian Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal said on Sept. 22 that the Iraqi constitution "could split the country apart." He told *Reuters* that Iraq is "gradually going toward disintegration" and that "will draw the countries of the region into conflict."

Just days later, the Brussels-based International Crisis Group warned on Sept. 26 that "a rushed constitutional process has deepened rifts and hardened feelings" among Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds. It said "the constitution is likely to fuel rather than dampen the insurgency, encourage ethnic and sectarian violence, and hasten the country's violent break-up."

Sunni Arabs in particular felt the charter had been stacked against them by allowing oil-rich provinces in the Shiite south and Kurdish north to form autonomous regions. Sunnis showed some of the greatest enthusiasm for the vote: Not because they were "joining the base of this broad political process," as Condoleezza Rice put it, but "So that history can witness that we said no," as Sunnis from the town of Balad explained to the *Washington Post*.

Even more ominous, another Sunni told the *Past*, "The fight will continue against the Americans, whether we vote yes or no."

The referendum only hardened their bitterness because of suspicious ballots results. If voters in any three of Iraq's 18 provinces had rejected the charter by a two-thirds majority, the constitution would have failed. According to the *New York Times*, Sunnis dominate in four provinces. In two of the Sunni provinces, Anbar and Salaheddin, more than 70 percent rejected the constitution. But in a third, Nineveh, some 78 percent are said to have approved the document, prompting cries of fraud.

Of the 2.5 million people in Nineveh, some 90 percent come from communities, such as Arab, Turkomen and Assyrian, overwhelmingly opposed to the constitution. Yet initial results put the no vote at a paltry 100,000.

Beforehand, one journalist predicted fraud in Nineveh, explaining how Kurds rigged the vote there in January. Gareth Porter, in an article entitled "Stuffing Iraq's Ballot Boxes," spoke with U.S. Army Maj. Anthony Cruz who worked with the province's electoral commission. Cruz recounted how ballots failed to get to non-Kurd areas, while Kurdish militiamen stole others. One village of 12,000 returned 115,000 ballots, leading Cruz at the time to joke about a "500 percent voter-participation rate."

With Sunnis convinced that the process

was rigged, the sectarian conflict will likely intensify. But another inescapable factor is also adding to the strife: oil.

The story is buried deep in the constitution.

Article 109 of the new constitution recognizes the country's vast oil wealth as "the property of all the Iraqi people." But Article 110 leaves a loophole big enough to sail an oil tanker through by giving the federal government jurisdiction only over "oil and gas extracted from current fields." According to Phyllis Bennis of the Institute for Policy Studies, "current fields" cover just one-third of Iraq's known reserves of 115 billion barrels.

The same article states that the federal government and producing regions will together "develop oil and gas wealth ... relying on the most modern techniques of market principles and encouraging investment."

The constitution then states: "All that is not written in the exclusive powers of the federal authorities is in the authority of the regions." Incredibly, in any dispute between regions and the federal government over shared powers, "priority will be given to the region's law."

Finally, Article 114 allows "One province or more... the right to form a region" through a referendum, while Article 129 calls for regional governments to organize "internal security forces for the region such as police, security and regional guards."

To sum it all up, any one of Iraq's 18 provinces can set up an autonomous region with its own government and military force, negotiate with outside companies to exploit oil reserves and dispute any "shared power" with the federal government – such as developing reserves – knowing that it will win every time.

These provisions outline the concept of "federalism" that has provoked intense Sunni opposition. But enthusiasm for the "democratic process" has waned among other communities. In the southern province of Najaf, reported the *Washington Post*, an estimated 50 percent of voters turned out for the Oct. 15 referendum versus 80 percent in January.

With an ineffectual government composed mainly of exiles and self-interested parties, most Iraqis are more concerned about basic services, jobs and security than another round of balloting, which is coming in December.

The frustration was best summed up by one Iraqi who told Robert Fisk of *The Independent* (London) that while the constitution was important, "my family lives in fear of kidnapping, I'm too afraid to tell my father I work for journalists, and we only have one hour in six of electricity and we can't even keep our food from going bad in the fridge. Federalism? You can't eat federalism and you can't use it to fuel your car."

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Merkel: Blame it on the Immigrants

By C.R. LEOPOLD

BOCHUM, GERMANY—Angela Merkel's rise to the chancellorship of Germany is a triumph more symbolic than real.

Merkel, the first woman and the first former East German to become chancellor, assumed her position on Oct. 10 following a split vote in the Sept. 18 general election and three weeks of closed-door negotiations among the five parties that hold seats in Germany's parliament. While some commentators see Merkel, leader of the conservative, pro-free market Christian Democrats, as the second coming of Margaret Thatcher, the reality is she will find her hands tied by the deals she had to cut with the Social Democrats, the main opposition party.

Major economic proposals – tax laws, revised employment regulations and union laws, obscure but profoundly influential banking and finance legislation, etc. – will likely stall out on the floor of parliament as politicians look warily toward local elections in two years. Meanwhile, because the Greens have been sidelined, and because the New Left Party of former Finance Minister Oskar LaFontaine actually represents populist outrage about

high unemployment, Merkel's coalition government will likely be forced to appear as if it's responding to populist concerns about protecting German workers, without appearing to deal directly with Lafontaine's xenophobic new party.

That means the only legislation likely to be considered seriously in parliament will pertain to immigration policy. Although the German government can toughen its immigration policies only so far before it risks violating EU regulations, Merkel's government will be tempted to target immigrants and ethnic minorities as the source of Germany's economic woes in order to distract voters from highly unpopular economic restructuring. Exactly what she has planned is hard to say.

The main conceit and central theme of her government will be the "German family." Forays on the immigration front will be justified on the grounds of making Germany more friendly to German families – with the ostensible aim of getting the sinking birth rate above the death rate. But the real aim is to save Germany from takeover by ethnic minorities, who, in contrast to so-called Aryan Germans, eagerly rear multi-



child families. However, the track record of the new Economy and Technology Minister, Edmund Stoiber, in his home state of Bavaria reveals the actual premise of Merkel's government: servitude to Big Business. Under Stoiber, the oh-so-German firm Siemens shipped thousands of jobs to China without any discernible benefit to Bavaria, to German workers or to German consumers. Stoiber did nothing to staunch the job losses.

This points to a great big contradiction at the heart of the Christian Democrats' political economy: They give Big Business what it wants but claim to be pro-German. Yet, what Big Business wants is the elimination of German laws that prevent its pulling up the tent stakes and moving to India or China or Brazil. Quite simply, Big Business is bad for the German family.

The main reason young German couples do not have children is because they're either afraid of or depressed about the future. They know they cannot give their children the same quality of life in which they themselves grew up. They also know that their own job situation is, at best, tenuous. They know they don't have savings in the bank. They know that newly reformed welfare laws are risible. They know that unemployment here is likely to increase.

One tempting solution for Merkel? Find a scapegoat. Distract the common people from the economic machinations of an ultra-elitist government.

Pike the foreigner to pacify the natives.

C.R. Leopold is an American-born writer currently living in Germany.

Nobel Committee Decides ElBaradei's the Bomb

By DONALD PANETH

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y.—Egyptian state television interrupted a soap opera to announce that the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize had been awarded to Mohamed ElBaradei. ElBaradei, a 63-year-old Egyptian lawyer and diplomat, had headed the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) since 1997. IAEA shared the prize, which totaled \$1.3 million, with ElBaradei.

For many, the award spotlighted the ironies of diplomacy, the duplicities of the Bush administration in the lead-up to the Iraq War and the failures of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament negotiations.

On March 7, 2003, ElBaradei reported to the U.N. Security Council that IAEA inspectors had found "no evidence or plausible

indication of the revival of a nuclear weapon program in Iraq."

Inspection sites included those that Secretary of State Colin Powell had alleged concealed nuclear weapons activities.

The United States contended that time had run out, and with the United Kingdom, invaded Iraq on March 19. No weapons of mass destruction were found. Nevertheless, the United States campaigned vigorously this year against a third term for ElBaradei as IAEA director-general. The campaign received little support, and ElBaradei was reappointed.

The Nobel citation said the work of the IAEA was invaluable "at a time when disarmament efforts appear deadlocked, when there is a danger that nuclear arms will spread both to States and to terrorist groups, and when nuclear power again appears to be playing

an increasingly significant role."

Nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament have sustained a number of recent setbacks.

Last May, the United States blocked discussion of substantive issues at the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review conference. The three-week conference was a complete waste of preparations, time and funds.

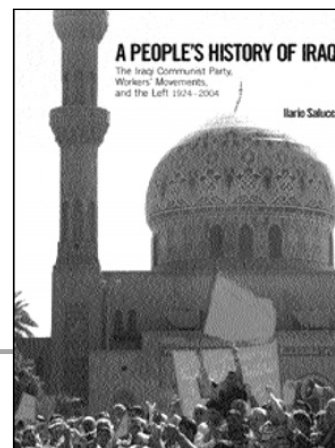
In September, the highly touted U.N. "summit," attended by 149 heads of state, among them President George W. Bush, ignored arms issues and dropped all references to the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the need for disarmament by the nuclear weapons powers.

The summit was torpedoed not only by the United States but by other Western powers that have no intention of supplanting the political will, funds, technology, expertise, and skills

needed to meet the U.N. Millennium Goals by 2015. Those goals include cutting in half the number of people suffering hunger and living in extreme poverty, providing universal primary education, and reducing under-five child mortality by three-fourths.

Another conference in September, aimed at putting into effect the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), went nowhere. The CTBT, ratified by 125 countries, lists 44 countries whose ratification is essential for the treaty's operation. Of those, 11 nations have still not ratified including China, the United States, North Korea, India, Pakistan, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran and Israel.

Donald Paneth is The Independent's U.N. correspondent. He has covered the United Nations since 1946.



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ILARIO SALUCCI

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WED OCT 26 @ 7PM • FREE

Reading: Nell Bernstein *All Alone in the World*

In *All Alone in the World: Children of the Incarcerated*, award-winning journalist Nell Bernstein takes an intimate look at the parents and children torn apart by the American penal system. She examines how the current American penal system strips poor communities of familial bonds and contributes to unemployment, untreated addiction and reincarceration.

FRI OCT 28 @ 7PM • FREE

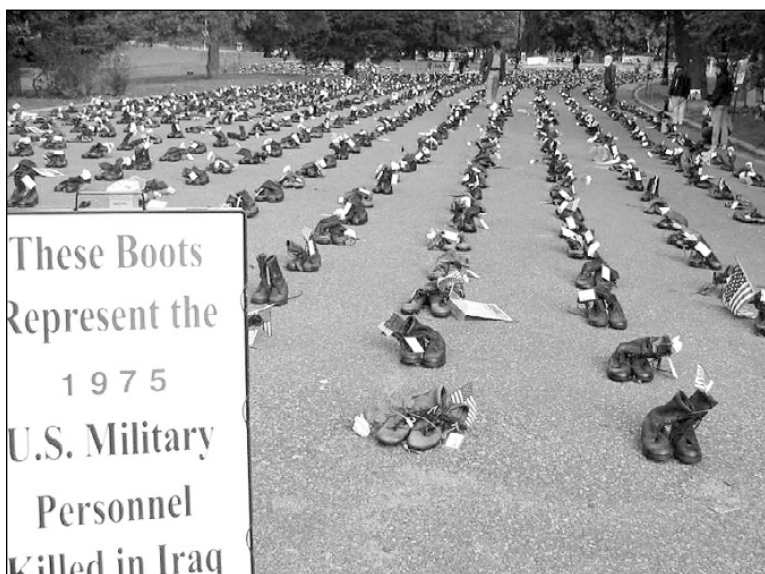
Performance: Reverend Billy and the Stop Shopping Gospel Choir

Reverend Billy is "an act...an art...almost a religion" (*NY Times*). Led by Bill Talen, the post-religious "Church" tries to exorcise the "Devil" of sweatshop-produced and petroleum-centric products in chain stores and supermarkets. The book *What Should I Do If Reverend Billy Is in My Store?* ain't gonna help keep him out of Bluestockings.

SUN NOV 6 @ 2:30PM • Free

Feminist Book Club: Ariel Levy
Female Chauvinist Pigs

The feminist book club debates books and serves as a venue for the discussion of feminism rather than a forum for affirming any predetermined feminist platform. We make no claim about what feminism is or whom it serves. Rather, we rely on feminism(s) as a lens for examination. We read theoretical texts, literature and primary works. The book club is open to everyone, and welcomes people of all genders, political persuasions and levels of familiarity with feminism. We meet on the first Sunday of every month. Books are chosen by consensus. Please contact feminist-bookclub@yahoo.com for more information.



THE EYES WIDE OPEN INSTALLATION was displayed in Prospect Park on Oct. 16 and will be in Union Square Oct. 22-23. PHOTO: BENNETT BAUMER

Eyes Wide Open

The most affecting memorials are often the simplest. When "Eyes Wide Open: Beyond Fear – Towards Hope," an exhibit created by the American Friends Service Committee of Chicago, first arrived in New York in late August 2004, it comprised almost 1,000 pair of military boots, each representing a U.S. soldier killed during the war in Iraq. On its second tour through the area, the display includes almost twice as many. Each pair of boots bears a tag indicating the name, rank and home state of a soldier. The boots are arranged in tight rows, organized by state. The narrow pathways between the rows require visitors to move slowly among them. Boots representing soldiers from other countries who have been killed are also included, as well as a memorial for soldiers who have committed suicide. Completing the picture of the human cost of war is a collection of civilian shoes of all shapes and sizes; some have names attached to them, many do not. While there is still no official count of the number of Iraqi civilian casualties, a Johns Hopkins University study estimated that by September 2004 at least 100,000 Iraqis had died as a result of the war and occupation. Photographs of Iraqi civilians, taken just after the fall of Baghdad, accompany the shoes. First displayed in Chicago in January 2004, the exhibit resumed touring this past summer. It will be on display in Military Park in Newark, NJ, Oct. 19-20, and in Union Square in Manhattan on Oct. 22 and 23, before moving on to Massachusetts and upstate New York.

For more information, visit www.eyes.afsc.org

—SUSAN CHENELLE

McCarthy Mania

GOOD NIGHT, AND GOOD LUCK
Warner Independent Pictures, 2005

Good Night, and Good Luck, a product of George Clooney's confident direction and his stunning use of black-and-white photography, invokes a time in which Sen. Joseph McCarthy bullied fearful citizens into silence. It is a period in U.S. history that many astute commentators, Clooney among

them, have compared to our own. However the power of *Good Night, and Good Luck* comes less from similarities than differences – less from its portrayal of a resonant political era than from its nostalgic invocation of a very different journalistic time.

"Good night, and good luck" was the on-air sign-off of Edward R. Murrow, one of the true icons of 20th-century American journalism. First achieving fame with his war reporting from Britain during the Blitz (his signature opening, "This is London," electrified audiences),

Murrow, by the early 1950s, had made the jump to the new medium of television. While Murrow is best remembered for his work on CBS's *See It Now*, including TV documentaries and his groundbreaking investigative reporting on political affairs, the title phrase, "Good night, and good luck" slyly recalls Murrow's second gig, his pop-culture interview program *Person-to-Person*. It was the income-generating "interviews" with Liberace and Rin Tin Tin on *Person-to-Person*, Clooney implies, that paid Murrow's bills and ultimately kept him employed by CBS, as *See It Now* began to train its journalistic sights on the McCarthy slime machine.

Clooney has received much-deserved praise for not hiring an actor to portray McCarthy but rather showing him only through old stock footage. It is less the evil of McCarthy that comes across this way than his utter banality. McCarthy died in 1957 of acute hepatitis, and as the junior senator from Wisconsin takes to the air to denounce Murrow, theatergoers can almost hear him slurring his words.

Despite its infamously controversial subject matter, *Good Night, and Good Luck*, is not always easy to watch. Much like the era it recalls, the film is drawn out, serious, and somewhat didactic. On the other hand, the directing is superb and David Strathairn turns in a career-defining performance as Murrow.

Clooney has talked up the film's political resonance in interviews with various press outlets. Critiques from *Slate*'s Jack Schaeffer and Caryn James of the *New York Times* have taken the director to task for oversimplifying and over-dramatizing a complex historical period in this "liberal puff-piece."

Most jarring, however, is the film's attention to the transformation of the news media in the 50 years since "Murrow's boys" stalked the small screen. The days when a single newscaster, from a major network could "take on" a national political figure are long gone. Murrow's legacy today, it seems, stems less from *See It Now* than from his celebrity interviews.

—CHRIS ANDERSON

Thug Life

BY NICHOLAS POWERS

"Can I hit it raw?" Her face is in my hands and she teases, "Is that how you say love in thug?" Our legs are locked around each other. "And if I became pregnant?" We stare eye to eye, measuring the desire hidden in the dare. "If it's a boy let's name him William Bennett."

I tell her that William Bennett, the former Education Secretary, made a case for the pre-natal genocide of Black people. On his radio show *Morning in America*, he was debating a caller when his thinking took a sinister turn. He said, "If you wanted to reduce crime, you could – abort every Black baby in this country, and your crime rate would go down. That would be an impossible, ridiculous, and morally reprehensible thing to do, but your crime rate would go down."

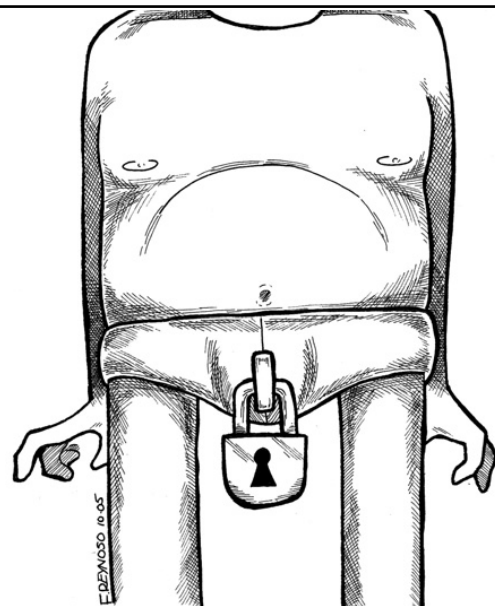
On *Fox News Sunday*, conservative Brit Hume affirmed Bennett's position, while liberal Juan Williams countered, saying Bennett gave "power to an offensive idea." He was half right. Ideas get power because power has to use ideas to justify itself. If violence were the only measure of authority, society would be a bloody scene. The ruling elite use ideas to create the illusion of tradition to sanction their power.

So we are told that poverty exists because the poor are lazy and crime will go down if Blacks stop having babies. What Juan Williams and other liberals should've said is crime doesn't come from the wombs of Black women but the society that sanctions their poverty and that poverty itself is a crime against humanity.

Babies aren't born poor or Black; their bodies are blank slates on which history is written. The history we inscribe on them will shape their lives before they have the power to read it. Inevitably the day comes when that child will look in the mirror and ask if this is who s/he wants to be. If so, the history will seem an eternal truth; if not, it will seem an alibi for their murder.

"I've had three abortions," she said, "RU-486 each one." Her voice was formal as if talking about someone else. She told me, at the time, having a baby seemed the only way to be loved. She would have a reason to live, to work and to triumph.

"I wanted the dream," she explained, "to be a



good girlfriend and mother, to feel complete." Each time the dream crashed against the reality of no money, against the nagging suspicion that she did not know, much less love, the father and that she wanted more of the world than a child.

She was stiff in my arms as if bracing for judgment. I didn't say anything but circled her navel with my hand. I remembered, years ago, lying in bed with my then-girlfriend after an abortion. She stayed in the bedroom all weekend, lights off, as if afraid of judgment staring back at her from the mirror.

Who was she afraid would see her, the ideal mother or girlfriend? If so, she was judging herself from the point of view of an ideal woman that does not exist. A fiction kept alive by conservatives, an ideal mother generations of women have struggled to be free from or to become.

Unwanted babies are the truth of a conservative ideology that returns women to the home, criminalizes abortions, cuts affirmative action and merges church and state. Black poor women are cornered in an isolated life. As the walls close in, many will reach for a connection to something larger than herself.

A child gives her a cause to believe in, an innocent being to love. If she can't love who she is, she can love herself through her child, in the hope that it will justify her failed life.

I put the condom away and we held each other instead. In silence we locked our limbs around each other. I didn't know what to say, after hearing her, except that I didn't want to wage a war against history over her body.



Palestinian Passion Play

PARADISE NOW
Warner Independent Pictures, 2005

Paradise Now is an aesthetically polished and humanly and politically on-target passion play about two Palestinian friends who are meticulously prepared to carry out a suicide bombing in Israel. Winner of multiple awards, it was co-written by Hany Abu-Assad, a Palestinian



The G-String / SHTUP IN THE NAME OF LOVE

BY AMY WOLF

living in Europe, and Bero Beyer, the Dutch producer. Directed by Abu-Assad, it humanizes and dignifies the plight of the Palestinian people, never sentimentalizing its subject even as it consumes the screen with feeling.

Abu-Assad researched the subject by studying the interrogation transcripts of suicide bombers who had failed and by speaking to people who personally knew bombers who had died. He found that "none of the stories were the same." In the film, while the phenomenon of suicide bombers is made fully understandable in terms of the humiliation and utter hopelessness of Palestinians, the two protagonists are quite differently motivated.

Magnetically portrayed by Kais Nashef, the complex Said is the very embodiment of a gravely wounded and desperate people grappling with conflicting impulses. The jauntier Khaled, his hidden intensity richly revealed by the actor Ali Suliman, seeks glory and instantaneous heavenly reward. The view of Palestinians who believe the bombings change nothing is voiced by Suha (played by Lubna Azabel), a young woman whose father runs a human rights organization and who was raised abroad.

After the suicide plans go awry, pivotal scenes of flight and pursuit, culminating in heart-stopping struggles in a speeding car and a midnight graveyard, capture the passions raging in the collective Palestinian soul. These high-

I took my goy Neshumeleh (Yiddish for "sweet-heart") to Yom Kippur services this year to fulfill his curiosity about this ancient religion that turns out these well-stacked, sex-positive Jewesses. He felt nervous about wearing the free yarmulke, but stuffed it in his pocket as a keepsake.

Premarital sex didn't make the short list of sins worth repenting, at least not in the prayer books handed out at Kolot Chayeinu, a progressive Park Slope congregation. Deceit, jealousy, arrogance and even cynicism made the cut, but not sex.

This is because in all sects of Judaism, love and sex are integral to God's commandment to be fruitful and multiply. Everything God creates is good, and God made sex, so therefore, sex, when done well, is divine.

As a Reform Jew, I kissed my first boy at a Jewish summer camp in West Virginia. I lost my virginity to a Jewish boy in Squirrel Hill, a Jewish neighborhood in Pittsburgh. We would snicker that sex was even a double mitzvah (Hebrew for "good deed") on the Sabbath. We conveniently dismissed the fact that it only counted as a mitzvah if you were married. I was not raised to think that sex was a sin, only that its appropriateness was tied to factors like age and the seriousness of your relationship.

More traditional interpretations of Jewish law

hold that sex outside of hetero-wedlock is a no-no, punishable by God. Thankfully, currents in modern Jewish thought emphasize the quality of the relationship of the couple. The Jewish philosopher Martin Buber wrote in 1923 that the "I-Thou" relationship between people — direct, mutual and open — is necessary for the sexual urge to be exercised in a godly way. He suggests that unwed teens should be discouraged from having sex because they are more likely to be in impersonal and selfishly motivated "I-It" relationships.

Jews believe in personal choice and free will. Just like Adam in the garden, we must learn the consequences of our actions. This also explains the popularity of JDate, a website that helps you choose and shtup yids your Bubbeh would like.

Acceptance or rejection of homosexuality in the Jewish faith depends on whether you believe homosexuality is a choice or a biological phenomenon. The following biblical edict frames it as a choice, and therefore punishable. "A man that lies with a man as with a woman, shall be cut off [from society]" (Lev. 20,13). However, some Jews see it as a natural occurrence and therefore an act of God. At Kolot Chayeinu, a lesbian couple and their child lit the candles to begin the service, with the entire congregation celebrating a committed, loving and fruitful queer relationship.



DAVID HOLLENBACH

Traditional Jews see marriage as a prerequisite for sex, but sex is recognized as a foundation for that marriage. The Talmud, a central scripture to the Jewish faith, specifies the quantity and quality of sex that a man must give his wife. There are no laws against oral or anal sex, and prolonged refusal on the part of either spouse can be grounds for divorce.

These sexual mores (in addition to our infamous love for money, of course) have been used by anti-Semites as explanation for our prominence in the porn industry. It's true, Annie Sprinkle was born Ellen Steinberg and Seymour Butts is a member of the tribe. But Team Jesus has Mary Carey, a porn star famous for her appearance at a George W. Bush fundraiser and for her love of Christ.

pressure events forever alter the young characters' lives.

While the movie touches on everyday activities like romance and dinner gatherings, we also learn that an Israeli work permit is a bitterly desired prize and that a typical young adult living in Nablus has never been outside of this West Bank refugee camp city.

There are wonderfully humorous scenes as well, like the young men

arguing with their auto repair shop boss over what constitutes a straightened fender, or the café patron who can't understand how Sweden can have the world's highest suicide rate when its citizens actually stop for traffic lights.

The direction, editing and camerawork dovetail harmoniously to powerful effect. Close-ups are artfully employed to emphasize wordless personal turmoil, scenes

of struggle are choreographed with an eye to maximum intensity, and the pace of the film perfectly mirrors the physical and emotional rhythm of events.

Throughout, we witness the impoverished condition of Nablus, with faceless Israeli soldiers brandishing machine guns at checkpoints. Only toward the end do we see a quick series of shots of Tel Aviv. Its glittering, skyscrapered

Westernness comes as a shocking contrast, which puts the lie to the myth of Israeli victimhood and begs the question of justice.

—DIANE MASON

The 2005 Palestinian/Dutch/German/French release, a New York Film Festival selection, opens Friday, Oct. 28, at the Lincoln Plaza and Landmark Sunshine theaters.

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Race, Urban Planning & Global Capitalism
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A Roundtable Discussion
Harmony Goldberg, Hany Khalil, John Kim & Others. Moderator Deepa Fernandes
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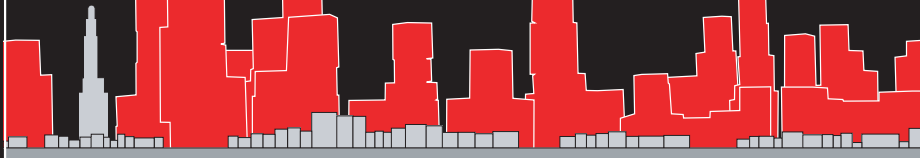


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